

Historic, Archive Document

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.

1.9
7732 Ra



HOW TO READ THE LABEL



September 25, 1930.

Cereal Products

By
W. W. Vincent
Food and Drug Administration

In order to purchase cereal products intelligently you should first look for the net weight statements upon the packages. You should then read the label carefully. Many cereals are exploited as "Health" foods in various forms of advertising. You may believe implicitly claims that may appear upon the package label. You should know what the standards for cereal products are and I give you a few of them today.

We will start with white flour. It is the clean, sound, fine-ground product, obtained in the commercial milling of wheat, and consists essentially of the starch and gluten of the endosperm. It contains not more than 15 per cent of moisture, not less than 1% of nitrogen, not more than 1% of ash, and not more than 0.5% of fiber.

It was in July, 1930, that, for the first time, the Secretary of Agriculture adopted an official standard for whole wheat flour. Whole Wheat Flour, entire wheat flour and graham flour are synonymous and consist of the product made by grinding wheat. They finished article contains in their natural proportions all of the constituents of the clean grain.

Patent Flour, or high grade flour, has a vague and somewhat indefinite meaning. It may be a 50 per cent patent or a 95 per cent patent. In the manufacture of flour the wheat berries are ground, sifted and separated into many parts. These parts are then combined into the various products that the miller produces. A 95 percent patent flour consists of that 95 percent of the flour produced which contains the least bran. The 50 percent patent likewise consists of the 50 percent of the flour produced which is the freest from bran. The rest of the flour after the patent is separated is called "clear flour" or "cut off".

Since in many parts of the country housewives desire a very white flour, millers often use bleaching agents such as chlorine, the oxides of nitrogen or certain organic substances. The law does not permit the bleaching of flour with any material which causes the flour to become poisonous or deleterious to health, nor does it permit bleaching to conceal damage or inferiority. Any person desiring to obtain flour which is not bleached should read the label carefully since the miller is required to place on the label of the package of bleached flour the word "bleached" or some similar designation.

Occasionally phosphates or calcium salts or other such harmless substances are added to flour in very small quantities, usually less than one

(over)

per cent. When added you will find reference to such addition on the label. You will occasionally note flour labels to declare the product as made from either hard wheat or soft wheat. Soft wheat flours contain relatively more starch and less gluten than do hard wheat flours. In cake or pastry work soft wheat flour is preferred, while hard wheat flours are used chiefly in bread baking.

Gluten Flour is made from wheat flour by the removal of a large part of the starch and contains not more than 10 percent of moisture and, calculated on the water-free basis, not less than 7.1 percent of nitrogen, and not more than 44 percent of starch as determined by the diastase method.

Rye Flour is the fine, clean, sound product made by bolting rye meal and contains not more than 13.5 per cent of moisture and not less than 1.36 percent of nitrogen and not more than 1.25 percent of ash.

Buckwheat Flour is bolted buckwheat meal and contains not more than 12 percent of moisture, not less than 1.28 per cent of nitrogen, and not more than 1.75 percent of ash.

Purified Middlings is the clean, sound granular product obtained in the commercial process of milling wheat, and is that portion of the endosperm retained on a 10XX silk bolting cloth. It contains no more flour than is consistent with good commercial practice, nor more than 15 percent of moisture.

Semolina is the purified middlings of durum wheat.

Farina is the purified middlings of hard wheat other than durum.

Most breads are manufactured and sold locally. The interstate traffic is relatively unimportant, but I will give you a few United States standards which are the same as employed by most states.

Bread, unqualified, means white wheat bread, and is obtained by baking a wheat bread dough in the form of a loaf, or of rolls, or of other units smaller than a loaf. It contains, one hour or more after baking, not more than 38 percent of moisture, as determined upon the entire loaf or other unit. In the preparation of the dough, flour, a leavening agent, shortening, sugar or other fermentable carbohydrate substance, and salt are generally employed. In addition, milk and limited amounts of non-objectionable salts which serve solely as yeast nutrients may be used, providing not more than 3 percent of the flour ingredient is not replaced by other edible farinaceous substance.

Milk Bread standards do not require the sole use of milk only in the preparation of the wheat bread dough. They only require that at least one-third of the water ingredient be furnished by milk or the constituents of milk solids in proportions normal for whole milk. The moisture limitation is the same as for wheat bread.

Raisin Bread is the bread obtained by baking wheat bread dough to which has been added sound raisins in a quantity equivalent to at least 3 ounces for each pound of the baked product. This product may contain proportions of sweetening and shortening ingredients greater than those commonly used in wheat bread.